

The Perfins Bulletin

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Seeking Publicity? (i.e., Publicity Perfins, Anyone?)

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One adjunct of perfin collecting for which little has been written is that of perfinned stamps with attached labels.

Philatelic labels serve many purposes: advertising, commemorative, ornamental, and blank (e.g., sheet dividers or booklet fillers). Collectors know of the various Belgian, Czechoslovakian, French, and German labels, among others. No doubt, some of these have been perfined accidentally, others intentionally.

Generally these labels are connected with perforations to the regular postal stamps of the sheet or booklet. The advertising labels of Italian stamps, however, are an integral part of the stamp; no perforations exist between stamp and label. The label is easily recognized and is usually printed in a different color from that of the stamp.

In 1924 Italy reissued nineteen stamps with advertising labels. Postage stamp dies of 1901-/-1919, all

showing portraits of King Victor Emmanuel III were used. Three 15 centesimi values of the 1919 design, five 25 centesimi values of the 1908 design, one 30 centesimi value of the 1908 design, nine 50 centesimi values of the 1908 design, and one 1 lira value of the 1901 design comprise the total, with some duplication of product labels in the total, but no duplication on each of those stamps of the same denomination.

Twelve different products are represented on the nineteen labels -- from cordials to sewing machines. The topical collector can see possibilities here. Each label, representing one product, was printed in one of the following colors: black, blue, brown, green, red, or ultramarine. Where the same advertisement appears on two different denominations, the colors of the labels vary. For example, the label for Reinach - a machine oil - is green on the 25 centesimi value, but blue on the 50 centesimi denomination.

The *Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue* lists this set of stamps as numbers 96b-105j and 87b. Some are rather scarce if we judge by the 1990 catalog values. Others are more common, especially the Singer label. Collectors of dogs on stamps are familiar with the Campari label showing a St. Bernard with cask under his chin. Also mentioned as a footnote in *Scott's* catalog are two additional items prepared but not released. Yet, catalog values are also given for these two also.

Assuming some of these publicity items are rare in



both mint and used condition, the collector can readily understand the next to impossible task of finding perfins examples on each of the different denominations with each of the different labels.



Of the few examples in the writer's collection, only one shows a perfins through the label. Perfins on the remainder of the used examples are found only on the postage part of the stamp. Of the ten copies in my collection, five show the B.C.I. of Banca Commerciale Italiana. Two show different C.I.'s of Credito Italiano. One shows the B.I.S of Banca Italiana di Sconto. One shows the large "F" of A.F. Formiggini and one shows the S.E.U. of Societa Editrice "Unitas."

At least three of the companies that advertised by using postal labels had perfins devices. They were Coen S/PC, Reinach E.R., and Cioccolato Perugina C.P. The latter label was one of the two never released, but it would be an ideal tie-in to find the other two labels with the perfins of the advertiser.

There are many more examples of Belgian publicity labels than Italian ones, but the writer is unaware of any with perfins. Perhaps because the Belgian labels were attached with perforations to postage stamps, they were easily separated before the stamps were placed in the perfins device. Or it just might be that none of these Belgian items made it to the perfins stage?

If any reader can contribute further information or examples of perfinned publicity labels - especially those of Belgium or Italy - please write.